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United States Patent [19]

Levy

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[54] **COLLAPSIBLE KEYBOARD**

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[58] **Field of Search** ..... 400/492, 490, 493, 495, 400/472; 200/5 R, 5 A, 515, 514, 513, 512; 235/145 R

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A collapsible keyboard for use with portable personal computers is disclosed. A first preferred embodiment of the present invention comprises a keyboard molded from a conductive, elastomeric material and a collapsible frame/circuit board substrate, the substrate having a plurality of electrical contacts to indicate to the computer when a key is pressed. As the keyboard is formed from an elastic material, it can be compressed into a first, closed position of minimum size to facilitate carrying the computer and to minimize the computer's size. In the keyboard's second, expanded position, each of the molded keys overlies a pair of contacts. When a key is pressed while the keyboard is in this second position, an electrical circuit is formed by the key and the contacts, indicating to the computer both that a key has been pressed and which key has been pressed. In another embodiment of the present invention, two pairs of contacts underlie each key, one pair being used when the keyboard is in its first position and the other pair being used when the keyboard is in its second position.

5 Claims, 1 Drawing Sheet